

GETTING NOWHERE AT QUEEN'S PARK?

CALL THE
OMBUDSMAN.

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“**W**HEN you have a problem or concern with Queen's Park, I am here to help open doors. I have been given special powers by the Legislature to help the people of Ontario resolve problems they have with the administration of the provincial government. I will get involved and look at both sides of the issue to try to help resolve the situation to everyone's satisfaction.”

Robina Jamison

THE

OMBUDSMAN

of Ontario is here to lend a hand when you can't resolve your problem with a provincial government organization. Her involvement can often find a solution which not only helps you, but which also improves the quality of public service for all the people in Ontario.

While the services of the Ombudsman are available to everyone who has a problem with the Ontario provincial government administration, the Ombudsman is particularly alert to serving the needs of those individuals and groups in society who may be most vulnerable to injustice and unfairness, and who are most likely to require assistance to find a resolution.

Turn the page and find out what we do for you.

SOMEONE

YOU CAN TURN TO. JUST WHAT IS AN OMBUDSMAN?

Think of the Ombudsman as someone you can turn to when the provincial government seems to have been unfair and there is nobody else willing to listen to the concern or problem you have with the way the provincial government is working. Because she knows the system and is respected by government officials, the Ombudsman can often sort out your problem quickly. If she can't, the Ombudsman can use her investigative powers to get to the heart of the matter, and then make recommendations which, if necessary, she can then bring to the attention of the Legislature.

Although appointed by the Legislature, the Ombudsman is totally independent, free from any political ties or governmental influences. This freedom allows her to deal objectively with your situation and to find a resolution that is fair and unbiased. By bringing your problem to her attention, you may be able to help the provincial government serve all people of Ontario better in the future. If the Ombudsman finds she is unable to deal with your problem, she will refer you to someone who can.

WHO IS YOUR OMBUDSMAN?

Roberta Jamieson is Ontario's Ombudsman. She was appointed in 1989. Her job is not an advocate for the public nor a defender of the bureaucracy. She is someone who believes in a 'non-adversarial' approach to conflict resolution. This simply means that the Ombudsman tries her very best to seek out a mutually-satisfactory resolution to the problem.

PEOPLE *for* PEOPLE

HOW DO WE SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM?

If you feel a wrong has been done or that the provincial government could have served you better, the Ombudsman has the resources and independence to investigate your claim and the power to recommend changes to put it right. Often, these changes will prevent the problem from occurring again, for other people in the future.

How does she achieve results? Well, think of the Ombudsman as a referee. She will first weigh both sides of an issue or conflict. Then she will try to get

both sides to reach an agreement by consensus, rather than confrontation. However, in the end, the Ombudsman will make the final recommendation to resolve the issue.

The decisions of the Ombudsman can help solve your present problem and contribute to improving the quality of provincial government service that people will receive in the future.

WHEN CAN WE HELP YOU?

Before you make a call to the Ombudsman, it's important that you have done the following: try to solve the problem by dealing with the person or group involved; if that fails to achieve a resolution try going to the head of the organization; call to see if your local MPP can help; and finally, make sure you have gone through all possible appeals. When you have nobody left to turn to, that's the time to call on the Ombudsman.

However, if you are not sure you've covered all the bases, please call us and we'll tell you if we are able to help.

CAN ANYONE CALL THE OMBUDSMAN?

Yes, after all, we are all affected by the actions of the provincial government. If you are encountering difficulties with Queen's Park in resolving a decision or act that you believe was unfair, illegal, unreasonable, unjust, mistaken or just plain wrong, you can call upon the Ombudsman.

When you call or write her, a friendly and helpful staff member will take all the information. If you are more comfortable discussing your problem in a language other than English or French, let us know and we'll arrange it. If you need a telephone device for the deaf, call us at 416-586-3510 or 416-586-3512.

WHAT KIND OF PROBLEMS CAN WE LOOK INTO?

Last year over 30,000 people called the Ombudsman for help involving an Ontario government agency.

Just a few of the hundreds of issues she deals with include:

DENIAL OF FAMILY BENEFITS

DELAYS IN SOCIAL SERVICES

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

FAMILY BENEFITS

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

NON-PROFIT HOUSING

OHIP

UNJUST TREATMENT

OR PUNISHMENT OF INMATES

JOB OPPORTUNITY DENIALS

ACCESS TO SERVICES

If you have a problem, her decisions and recommendations can result in a resolution of your situation, as well as helping other people from running into the same problem again.

HOW MUCH DOES THIS COST YOU?

Absolutely nothing. The Ombudsman is here to help, not to make your situation even more difficult by adding a financial burden.

We often find a few phone calls or letters can get your problem ironed out. If not, you can call on the Ombudsman to investigate thoroughly and to make recommendations on how to set things right with the provincial government body concerned.

If the Ombudsman finds that the action taken by the provincial government was appropriate, she will explain how she reached her conclusion.

HOW CAN YOU HELP THE OMBUDSMAN?

Most importantly, make sure that your problem is with the Ontario Provincial Government and that

you have done everything possible to get them to deal with your concerns. If you are still not satisfied, that's the time to contact us.

Remember, it's your right to speak up. When you raise an issue or concern, you are doing something to help yourself, but your actions may also help improve a government service that will benefit everyone in Ontario.

ALL

YOU
HAVE TO DO IS
CONTACT
US...

Call, write or send the Ombudsman a tape cassette telling in your own words all the details of your problem and how she can reach you. Once you have contacted the Ombudsman, she will look into your concern in a quick and professional manner.

CALL TOLL FREE

1-800-263-1830 (English service)

— OR —

1-800-387-2620 (French service)

If you are an inmate please call the Ombudsman
at 416-586-3468 or 586-3470.

For deaf and hard of hearing persons, please call
416-586-3510 or 416-586-3512.

Write, telephone or visit:
Office of the Ombudsman

125 Queen's Park

Toronto, Ontario

M5S 2C7

(416) 586-3300

DISTRICT OFFICES

Please feel free to make collect calls to any of these locations listed below.

OMBUDSMAN ONTARIO

125 Queen's Park

Toronto, Ontario M5S 2C7

(416) 586-3300

Toll Free Line: 1-800-263-1830

French Toll Free: 1-800-387-2620

TDD Lines:

(416) 586-3510 586-3512

Toronto Fax # (416) 586-3485

KENORA OFFICE

100 Chipman Street, Unit 10

Market Square

Kenora, Ontario P9N 4E4

1-807-468-2851

Fax—807-468-2853

LONDON OFFICE

402 Adelaide Street North

London, Ontario N6B 3H6

1-519-675-7741

Fax—519-438-2399

NORTH BAY OFFICE

450 Main Street West, Unit #2

North Bay, Ontario P1B 2V2

1-705-476-5800

Fax—705-497-9931

OTTAWA OFFICE

#308, 151 Slater Street

Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5H3

1-613-239-1487

Fax—613-239-1489

SAULT STE. MARIE OFFICE

500 Bay Street

Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6A 1X5

1-705-945-6914

Fax—705-945-6916

SUDBURY OFFICE

66 Elm Street, Suite 108

Sudbury, Ontario P3C 1R8

1-705-688-3116

Fax—705-688-3084

THUNDER BAY OFFICE

213 Red River Road

Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 1A5

1-807-345-9235

Fax—807-345-0378

TIMMINS OFFICE

30-32 Balsam Street South

Timmins, Ontario P4N 2C6

1-705-268-2161

Fax—705-268-8377

WINDSOR OFFICE

232 Erie Street West, Main Floor

Windsor, Ontario N9A 6B5

1-519-977-8006

Fax—519-977-1495

